

**Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports -
Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified and Goals and Priorities and Use of Title
I Funds of Innovation and Expansion Activities**

State Unified Plan

The State Unified Plan requires partner agencies to describe actions that will be taken if performance falls short of expectations. The Rehabilitation Act provides remedies and plans for state agencies that do not achieve required performance standards. State Plan Attachment 4.11(e)(2) addresses Unified Plan requirements in their entirety. This attachment clearly demonstrates:

- 1) The public vocational rehabilitation program's descriptions as to achievement of all goals and strategies described in the FFY 2008 State Plan attachments 4.11 (c)(1) and 4.11 (d).
- 2) All goals are being achieved.
- 3) The Division of Rehabilitation Services in South Dakota exceeds all standards and indicators pursuant to performance standards in the Rehabilitation Act.
- 4) As evidenced in the Attachment 4.2c and in the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) report to the Governor, there is an evaluation of progress made in improving the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program from the prior year.

Performance outcomes of the vocational rehabilitation program are summarized for and addressed to the Workforce Development Council as well as the state rehabilitation councils.

Progress in Accomplishing Strategies and Goals

This section of the State Plan is a summary of the progress in accomplishing the Strategies and Goals as identified in FFY 2008 State Plan Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and 4.11(d).

Goal 1: Improve and expand services that will enhance earnings, employee benefits and career advancement for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

Goal 2: Expand and strengthen community partnerships with business (or employers) service providers and service organizations in communities across the state.

Goal 3: Strengthen partnerships with DRS customers to ensure consumer choice, responsibility and involvement throughout the rehabilitation process.

Goal 4: Improve and expand outreach and training efforts regarding vocational rehabilitation services to the general public.

Goal 5: Monitor and evaluate the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services:

Federal Program Evaluation Standards

In accordance with the provisions of the 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education has proposed the following evaluation standards (see Federal Register Vol.63, No. 198 issued on October 14, 1998 on Proposed Rules, pages 55292- 55305). The proposed standards 1 and 4 are based on section 106 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P. L. 105-220 of August 7, 1998), which contains the 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. The proposed standards 2, 3, and 5 are not based on the Workforce Investment Act, but the Secretary believes that they are important factors in successful rehabilitation programs. Standards 1 and 2 have been finalized as published in the Federal Register Vol.65, No. 108 issued on June 5, 2000, pages 35792 - 35801. The remaining standards have not yet been finalized.

Standard 1: Employment Outcomes

Standard 1 is based on section 106 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P. L. 105-220 of August 7, 1998), which contains the 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. This standard requires an agency to assist eligible individuals with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, to obtain, maintain, or regain high quality employment outcomes. The quality of an employment outcome is based on whether the outcome is consistent with the individual's vocational choices; is in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment; maintains or increases the individual's earnings; and allows medical insurance plans covering hospitalization. The following six performance indicators measure minimum compliance with this standard.

1. 1. Compare the total numbers of individuals obtaining an employment outcome during the current and previous performance periods.
- 1.2 Measure the number of persons obtaining an employment outcome as a percentage of all persons exiting the program after receiving VR services.
- 1.3. Measure the number of persons obtaining a competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment outcome as a percentage of all persons obtaining any type of employment outcome. **Primary Indicator**
- 1.4. Measure the percentage of competitively employed individuals who have significant disabilities. **Primary Indicator**
- 1.5. Measure the average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earnings levels equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the State's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the State who are employed. **Primary Indicator**
- 1.6. Measure the difference between the percentage of individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage who report their own income as their largest single source of economic support and the percentage of individuals in that employment who reported their own income as their largest single source of support at the time they applied for VR services.

Standard 2: Equal Access to Services

Standard 2 requires compliance with one performance indicator which measures equality of access to rehabilitation services.

- 2.1. Measure whether individuals from minority backgrounds have been provided services at the same rate as non-minority individuals.

Assessment of the State VR Agency in meeting the Performance Standards and Indicators

The Division of Rehabilitation Services has been monitoring the development of the performance standards and indicators. Utilizing the FFY 2007 data, the Division's performance was evaluated in meeting the minimum requirements for Standards 1 and 2. The following chart displays the outcome of this assessment.

Standard/Indicator	Minimum Requirement	Division's Outcome	Indicator Met
Standard 1: Employment Outcomes	4 of the 6 Indicators and 2 of the 3 Primary Indicators	6 of the 6 Indicators and 3 Primary Indicators	
Indicator 1.1	859	860	Yes
Indicator 1.2	55.8%	62.73%	Yes
Indicator 1.3	72.6%	100%	Yes
Indicator 1.4	62.4%	97.15%	Yes
Indicator 1.5	\$7.90 (estimated)	\$7.90	Yes
Indicator 1.6	53%	60.02%	Yes
Standard 2: Equal Access to Services	The Indicator must be met	The Indicator was met	
Indicator 2.1	80%	81.90%	Yes

Past Utilization of Innovation and Expansion Funds - DRS

Section 101 (a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as Amended requires the State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to reserve and use a portion of the funds for:

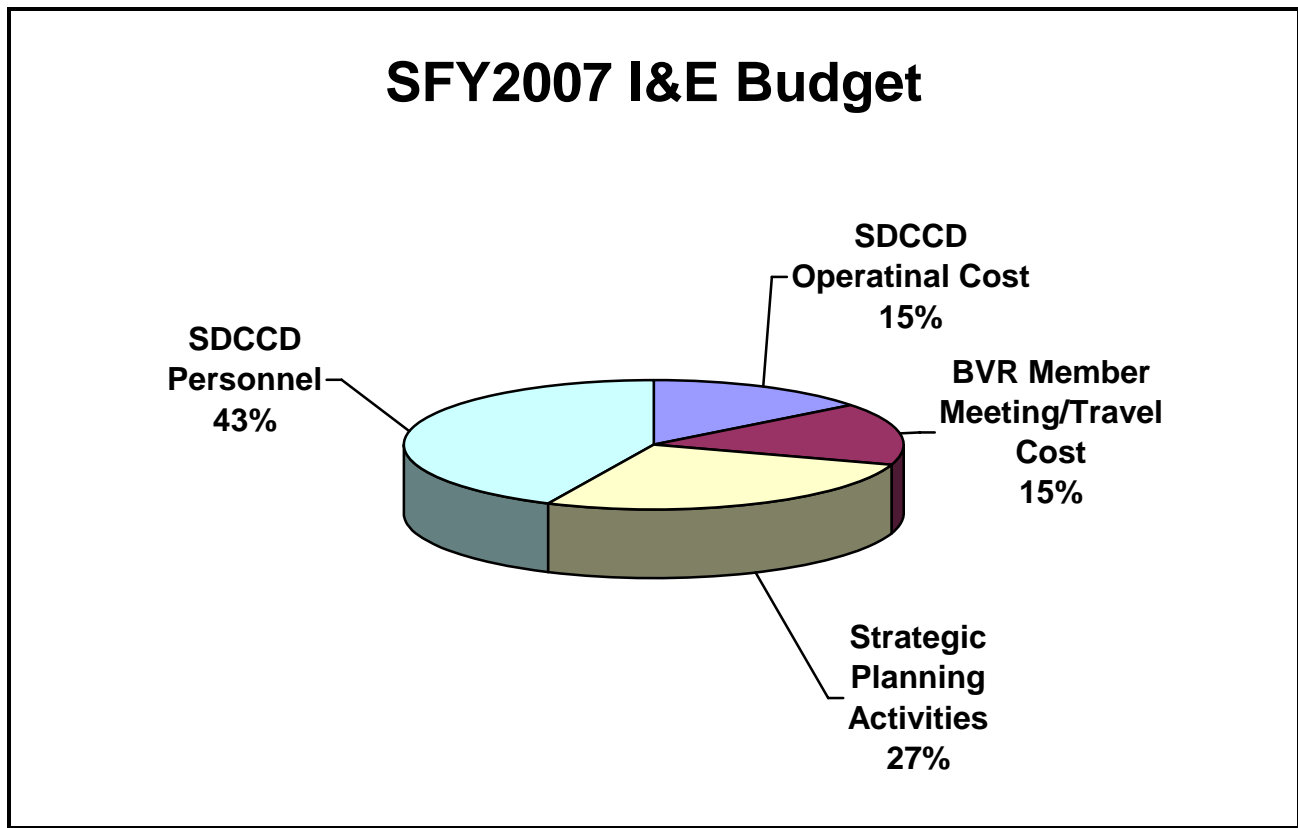
(i) The development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment and goals and priorities of the State; and

(ii) To support the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

Prior to the 1998 Amendments of the Rehabilitation Act, the Division of Rehabilitation Services was required to utilize 1.5% of the Federal 110 funds for Innovation and Expansion (I&E) activities. The Division continues to use these funds at an increased percentage. During the 2007 State Fiscal year, \$111,110 was spent for I&E activities through a contract with the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities. The contract provides for the following:

- ✓ Support staff for the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council contracted through the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities. This includes wages and benefits for .9 FTE Board support staff.
- ✓ Operational costs, equipment, travel for support staff and office supplies paid through the South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities.
- ✓ Costs involved in having members of the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Statewide Independent Living Council attend meetings/training.
- ✓ Strategic Planning Initiatives approved by the Board of VR to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment and goals and priorities of the State.

The following graph displays the distribution of these funds:



Expenditures for the Strategic Planning Activities for SFY 2007 consist of the following:

- ✓ \$5,210 – Public Meetings
- ✓ \$9,636 – National Disability Employment Awareness Month Activities
- ✓ \$634 - Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
- ✓ \$966 – Consumer Stipends